

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 EB-08
LAB-04 SIL-01 OES-07 TRSE-00 OMB-01 DOE-15 SOE-02
AID-05 INT-05 /101 W
-----124282 061304Z /50

R 050845Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY MBABANE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4379
INFO USDOC WASHDC
USICA WASHDC
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L MBABANE 1134

PRETORIA ALSO FOR BELL (USICA)

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, EGEN, WZ
SUBJECT: MINISTER S.S. NXUMALO'S TOUR D'HORIZON

HERWITH SUMMARY OF PRINCIPAL POINTS THAT EMERGED FROM
POL/ECON OFFICER PERLOW'S FOUR-HOUR WIDE-RANGING CONVERSATION
IN CHANCE MEETING IN LUSAKA, MARCH 29 WITH S.S. NXUMALO,
ACTIVIST SWAZILAND MINISTER OF INDUSTRY, MINES AND
TOURISM. NXUMALO WAS IN UNUSUALLY EXPANSIVE MOOD AFTER
WHAT HE TERMED SUCCESSFUL TWO-WEEK WORKING VISIT TO
EUROPE. FULL REPORT FOLLOWS BY AIRGRAM.

1. SUCCESSION TO THRONE
NXUMALO EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT SOBHUZA'S SUCCESSOR, WHO
NOT YET NAMED, WOULD LACK EXPOSURE TO MODERN IDEAS, INCLUDING
PARLIAMENTARY BODIES, LABOR UNIONS, MANAGEMENT OPERATIONS,
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ETC. EXPECTED TO COME FROM HIGHLY TRADITIONAL SECTOR, NEW
YOUNG KING COULD, IN ABSENCE OF EXPOSURE TO MODERN WESTERN
INSTITUTIONS, TRY TO RULE IN AUTOCRATIC WAY AND PROVOKE
REVOLUTION "WHICH NOBODY WANTED," SAID NXUMALO.
NXUMALO HOPED USG AGREEABLE TO OFFERING INTERNATIONAL
VISITOR GRANTS TO SEVERAL ROYAL PRINCES (LEADING CON-
TENDERS FOR THRONE) WHOM NXUMALO WILL HAVE KING NOMINATE

FOR GRANTS. FYI, ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS FOLLOW IN
SEPTTEL SLUGGED ICA/AF FOR CHARLES BELL.

2. PROPOSED OIL REFINERY

NXUMALO IS STILL PUSHING IDEA OF OIL REFINERY FOR
SWAZILAND. HE CLAIMS THAT THE EDF FEASIBILITY STUDY
SHOWED THAT, FOR DOLS 19 MILLION, REFINERY COULD BE
BUILT SMALL ENOUGH FOR SWAZILAND TO ABSORB TOTAL PRO-
DUCTION.

3. CORRUPTION IN SWAZILAND

NXUMALO STATED KING IS AWARE OF INCREASING EXTENT OF
IRREGULAR DEALINGS AND CORRUPTION AMONG CIVIL SERVANTS,
INCLUDING MINISTERS. BUT KING RULES BY CONSENSUS, AND
THAT IMPLIES A HIGH DEGREE OF PROTECTION. KING SEES
MINISTERS AS PROTECTORS OF THRONE AND THEREFORE NOT
EASILY DISCARDABLE.

4. TINKHUNDLA "ELECTIONS"

NXUMALO CONFIRMED EMBASSY'S REPORTS THAT "ELECTIONS" WOULD
PROBABLY BE CONSULTATIONS IN INDIVIDUAL AREAS, TO PRODUCE
CANDIDATES TO BE SUBMITTED TO KING.

5. NATIONAL AIRLINE

NXUMLAO ADMITTED THAT THE TWO VISCOUNT PLANES BOUGHT
BY GOS WERE A DUBIOUS INVESTMENT, HAVING REMAINING LIFE
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EXPECTANCY OF ONLY FIVE YEARS. ONE WILL BE SOLD AND A
65-SEAT FOKKER HAS ALREADY BEEN PURCHASED TO REPLACE IT.
HE SAID NETHERLANDS AGREED TO DETAIL SIX PILOTS AND
TECHNICIANS TO SWAZILAND, AND IRELAND WILL DETAIL FOUR
PILOTS.

6. SWAZILAND INDUSTRIALIZATION AND DEVELOPMENT

NXUMALO'S EUROPEAN VISIT PRODUCED OTHER BENEFITS:
HE CONCLUDED AN AGREEMENT FOR CONSTRUCTION OF
VOLVO ASSEMBLY PLANT IN SWAZILAND. VEHICLES WILL BE
SHIPPED TO KENYA FOR MARKETING. LUXEMBOURG AGREED
TO PROVIDE SCIENCE SCHOLARSHIPS PLUS LABORATORY
AND EQUIPMENT FOR UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF SWAZILAND.
LUXEMBURG ALSO AGREED TO ASSIST IN SETTING UP SITE
FOR PELLETIZATION OF LOW-GRADE IRON ORE
AT NGWENYA. BRUSHING ASIDE PERLOW'S MENTION OF
USG DOLS 10 MILLION IN BILATERAL AID THIS YEAR,
NXUMALO SAID USG ASSISTANCE SHOULD FOCUS INSTEAD
ON INDUSTRIALIZATION, SUCH AS ON PROPOSED OIL
REFINERY, TO HELP "BREAK THE CHAINS THAT TIE US TO
SOUTH AFRICA."

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MEETING REPORTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 05 apr 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978MBABAN01134
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780148-1033
Format: TEL
From: MBABANE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780490/aaaacyql.tel
Line Count: 116
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: f30eeeb5-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3069616
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MINISTER S.S. NXUMALO'S TOUR D'HORIZON HERWITH SUMMARY OF PRINCIPAL POINTS THAT EMERGED FROM POL/ECON OFFICER PERLOW'S FOUR-HOUR WIDE-RANGING C
TAGS: PINT, EGEN, ECON, WZ
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/f30eeeb5-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014